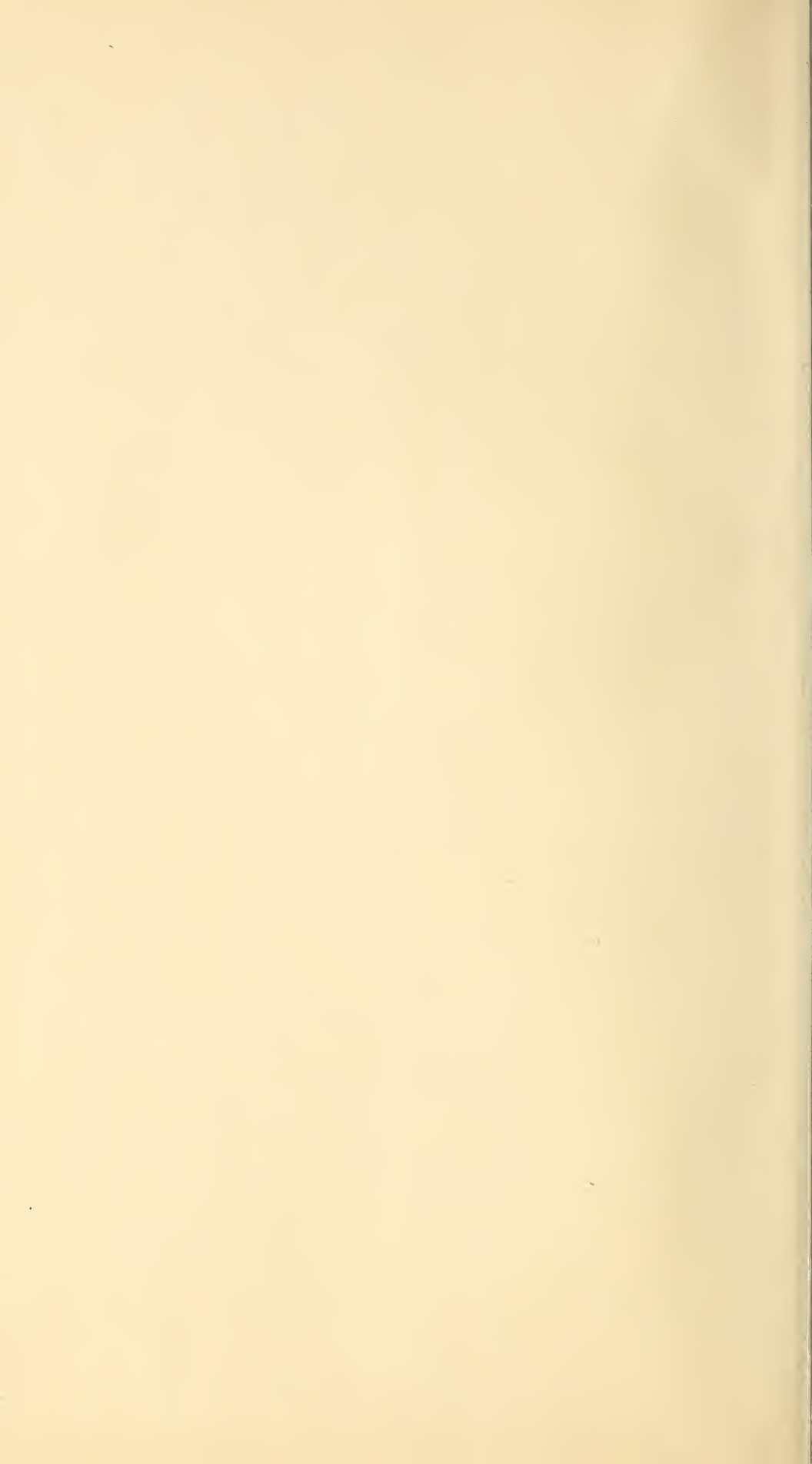
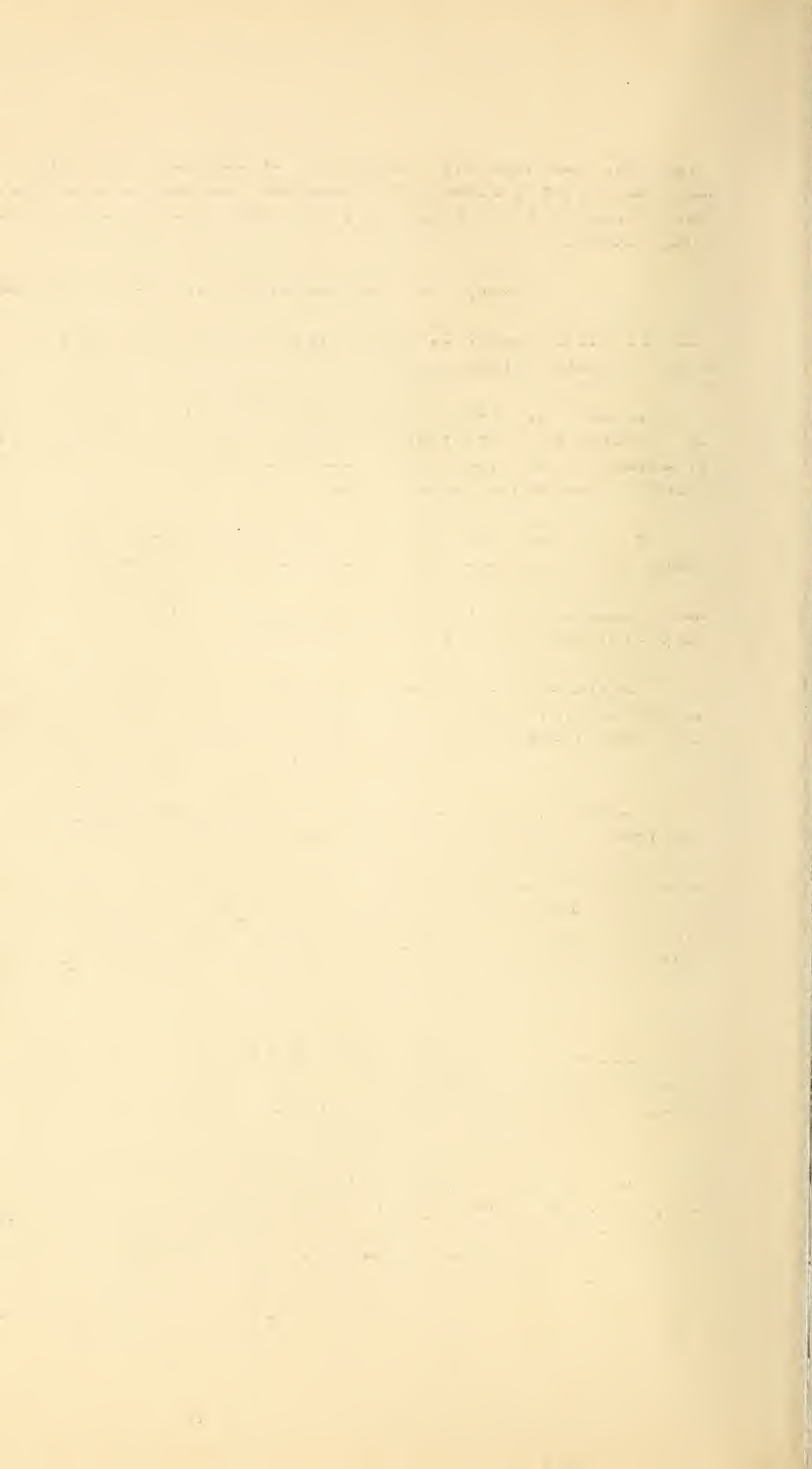


Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2015









HISTORY OF THE WINSTON-SALEM JUNIOR LEAGUE

BY

MARGARET BLAIR MCCUISTON





## HISTORY OF THE WINSTON-SALEM JUNIOR LEAGUE

It was twenty-three years ago that the Junior League of Winston-Salem had its beginning. On January 13, 1923, Mrs. J. Edward Johnston invited to her home at Reynolda about forty of her personal friends among the girls and young women of this city, and asked us to organize as an auxiliary to the Juvenile Relief Association. She gave us the idea that it would be eminently worthwhile for us to devote our time and energy to social service.

A few weeks later we were called together again. At this second meeting Mrs. Bess Gray Plumly presided. She explained to us that, according to the charter of the Juvenile Relief, we could not call ourselves their auxiliary; but she urged us to organize under another name. Upon the suggestion of Miss Marian Blair, we voted to apply for membership in the Association of Junior Leagues of America.

We were proposed by the Knoxville League, through Mrs. Clarence Carmichael (Alice Witt); seconded by Atlanta, through Mrs. J. W. Speas (Henrietta Davis); and accepted for membership in a short time. By March, 1923, we were a fully organized Junior League, with Mrs. Thurmond Chatham as our first president. We were about the forty-sixth League to be admitted to the Association, and the first in North Carolina. We were placed in the Southeast Region, now called Region V. As there are now one hundred and fifty-eight Leagues, nearly three-quarters of them are younger than we.

During our first year we naturally scattered our activities. We did hospital work; gave afternoon drives to the children from the Methodist Orphanage and the old ladies from the Salem Home; served lunch at the Y. W. C. A. and prepared Sunday night supper for the girls who lived at the Y.; contributed to the Sentinel Milk and Ice Fund; and made a donation to the Juvenile Relief Home. We gave a dance and a bazaar, from the proceeds of which we were able to begin our first independent line of work.

In January, 1924, the League employed Miss Isabel McPhail as Visiting Housekeeper. She served in that capacity for four years, and during that time she made more than ten thousand calls upon needy families. When she entered a poverty-stricken home, she gave a demonstration of house-cleaning, bathed the children, took the housekeeper downtown and showed her how to buy supplies economically, or gave any other aid that was needed. If there was illness, she arranged for the proper treatment. She kept in close touch at all times with the Associated Charities

and the City Health Department. Members of the League formed a motor corps to take Miss McPhail on her round of visits, and often went into the homes with her and assisted in the actual work.

During the second year of our existence, under the presidency of Mrs. Paul Montague, the League adopted the point system, whereby a minimum of eight hours of work a month was required of each active member. This rule was in effect for nine years. During this year we continued our work at the Y. W. C. A., gave a second bazaar, and decided to make our dance an annual affair.

In September, 1924, the League undertook to sponsor a prenatal clinic, which, at the time, was the only one of its kind in North Carolina. We held it at the Associated Charities House, two afternoons a week. The white patients were treated on one day, colored patients on the other. Careful examinations and instructions were given by Dr. Richard W. Spicer. The League members assisted by taking histories, making analyses, giving lessons in personal hygiene, and making baby clothes. In two and a half years, more than four hundred women were treated. During all that time we never lost a mother, nor had a case of convulsions. In the spring of 1927, we turned over our clinic to the City of Winston-Salem.

In March, 1925, Mrs. Kenneth Mountcastle was elected president of the League, and served two terms until March, 1927. She was our first president to attend a National Conference. Our first achievement during her administration was in sponsoring the appearance of Will Rogers and the deReschke quartet, in the Reynolds Auditorium, on December 3, 1925. From this we cleared four thousand dollars which we deposited as savings.

Feeling the need of a continuous income and because our bazaars had been successful, we opened a Gift Shop. We began on a small scale in the autumn of 1925. Our profits steadily increased, and we were located in the Robert E. Lee Hotel building, on Fifth Street. The Gift Shop was discontinued in 1942.

Since 1926, we have required our provisional members to take a training course before they are admitted to the League as active members. A course of lectures is given, and each provisional member is required to pass an examination on these lectures.

In March, 1927, Mrs. Fay Huntley Spencer (now Mrs. Sydney Ives) was elected president of the League, and during her administration we undertook the financing of our Hospital for Incurables.



(The idea was Miss Alice Gray's). We called on our friends for assistance, and raised sixty thousand dollars in ten days. Using this as a building fund, we began work on the building immediately.

In March, 1928, Mrs. Charles Long became president of the League, and on the fifteenth of that month we opened a Beauty Parlor. This was successfully operated for seventeen years, and was discontinued in 1945.

On May 15, 1928, we had Paper Day. The League took over the Journal and the Sentinel on that day. We edited the papers, obtained the advertisements, and sold the papers on the streets, clearing fifteen hundred dollars.

About this time the Arts and Interests and Children's Play Committee was formed, with Miss Miriam Efird (now Mrs. W. K. Hoyt) as its first chairman. From this have grown our present Education and Art Committees and our Play Group. The first play was presented in November, 1928.

In January, 1929, the Hospital for Incurables was opened to seventeen patients. After a year's successful operation, the Duke Foundation gave us one dollar per patient per day, which amounted to about two-thirds of our operating expenses.

In March, 1929, Mrs. Ralph Hanes was elected president, and was instrumental in starting our monthly News Sheet with Miss Dell Norfleet as its first editor. This is sent to each member of our League, and to News Sheet editors in other Leagues. It has received much favorable national comment, \* having taken the first prize for the "magazine type" of news sheet at the 1931 A. J. L. A. Conference; and having been listed as fourth best in ninety-nine submitted to the 1933 Conference.

In March, 1930, Mrs. Elsie Hines Norfleet (now Mrs. Charles Siewers) began her two years' service as president of the League. During her administration, we widened our interests in two distinct ways.

In the first place, we became more nationally minded with respect to the Association of Junior Leagues of America. We had kept in close touch with the Association, having sent delegates to every national conference since 1925, to every regional conference, and to one technical conference.

\* (Note Gloria Chandler's comment "best in A.J.L.A." on November 6, 1944)

Until Mrs. Norfleet's presidency, however, we had never had a visit from a national officer. In February, 1931, Mrs. Norfleet had as her guest Mrs. John G. Pratt of New Orleans, who, at that time, was Regional Director, and later President of the A. J. L. A. Since then we have been visited from headquarters at least once a year and sometimes more often.

In 1930 we began to realize that as an organization, we should increase our participation in community affairs. In this spirit we began our yearly assistance in the Community Chest drive. We also helped to organize the Civic Music Association in the spring of 1930. In the fall of 1931 we organized a Current Events class, under the auspices of the Arts and Interests Committee, and in January, 1932, we opened a Rag Market. This was a secondhand shop, from the proceeds of which contributions were made to civic affairs. About this time, too, we began having Occupational Therapy classes for the patients in our Hospital.

Interest in the national Magazine had been growing since 1927. By 1931 Winston-Salem had reached the point of having frequent articles published, and in 1932 Miss Elizabeth Dillard (now Mrs. R. J. Reynolds) was appointed on the Magazine Advisory Staff. About this time, too, Mrs. James Hanes and Mrs. Thurmond Chatham were appointed to membership on the National Shop Committee. (Our first national recognition).

In March, 1932, Mrs. James Hanes was elected Winston-Salem League president. During that year we organized a Scribblers Club and a Garden Club among our membership. We revised the Constitution, sponsored a series of lectures on child psychology, and enlarged the Rag Market, renaming it the Thrift Shop. We also began working out a Placement System, whereby each Junior League member might be placed in the line of work best suited to her abilities and tastes.

In March, 1933, Mrs. Linville Martin became our president. During the year and a half in which we had her leadership, we put the Placement System of work into effect, replacing the Point System. We also revised the Constitution, incorporating a secret membership committee.

Our interest in welfare work enlarged and deepened at this time, and we began having experts in this field lecture to our provisionals. We also increased our interest in Girl Scout work, particularly after the election of one of our members, Mrs. Arthur Spaugh, as Scout Commissioner. Since that time several Junior League members have held that office.



In 1933 we made the Arts and Interests a separate committee. Members of this committee assisted the Wachovia Historical Society in the Museum, making a card catalogue of the exhibits, and acting as guides on holidays. This committee also arranged several art exhibits.

In April, 1933, the Winston-Salem Play Group presented "Peter Pan" in Roanoke, and in December of that year we gave "The Secret Garden" in Charlotte. In the spring of 1934 the Charlotte League players presented "Ali Baba" in Winston-Salem. These have been our only attempts at exchanging plays, although we have assisted other Leagues with scenery, costumes, etc.

From October, 1934, to March, 1935, Mrs. James Hanes served her second term as president. The League's most important decision during this time was to continue the operation of our Hospital for Incurables in spite of the loss of support from the Duke Foundation, even though the budget ran between \$7,500.00 and \$8,000.00 a year.

During this time we sent a delegate to the National Conference on Welfare, obtained an exhibition golf match played by Bobby Jones, and had three distinguished guests: Mrs. Billy Shaw Howell, who at that time was Director of Region V; Miss Margaret Woodson, National Educational Educational Secretary, who gave the course to the provisionals; and Miss Helenka Adamowska, National Director of Plays for Children. Miss Adamowska held a Dramatic Institute, the objects of which were, first, to improve the quality of our plays, and second, to relate our work more closely to the needs of the children in the community. We gave a scene from "Blue Bird" and had a meeting with school executives. Following Miss Adamowska's recommendation, the Play Group began "trouping", producing plays in the auditoriums of the public schools.

In the spring of 1935, Mrs. W. H. Sprunt became our president. During her administration we operated the Hospital, without help from the Duke Foundation; provided an additional case worker for the Associated Charities for three months; and assisted the Garden Clubs of the city in their Flower Market.

The Winston-Salem Play Group was chosen to represent the medium-sized Leagues in presenting a one-act play before the Children's Theatre Conference in Baltimore, in February, 1936.

In March, 1936, Mrs. William K. Hoyt was elected president. Our first important decision during her term of office was to employ a professional Placement Secretary. Miss Mary Frances Shelburne served in that capacity for a year. Due to her efforts, volunteers were placed in more interesting and diversified new services. During the year, our members worked in the following fields: survey of handicapped children, Associated Charities, City and County Welfare Departments, visiting teachers, County Health Department, Art Center, City Library, Junior Red Cross, Girl Scouts, Y. W. C. A., and Braille Transcription for the American Red Cross. We became much more familiar with the needs of the community.

Miss Shelburne was also able to assist in directing our thinking in regard to the wisdom of continuing the Junior League Hospital for Incurables. When the Forsyth County Hospital was opened in March, 1937, their work duplicated, in a large measure, the work originally intended for the Junior League Hospital. On June 1, 1937, after every patient had been comfortably placed, either with relatives, in the County Hospital, or the Salem Home, our Hospital was closed.

Our whole attitude toward Junior League projects changed during these past years. We used to think that we must have one big permanent charity of our own, and direct all our efforts toward the support of that. More recently, we have decided that our greatest field of service to our community lies in the demonstration of new projects, which may later, if successful, be turned over to established charitable agencies for operation. This idea is in line with the policies outlined by the A. J. L. A.

With this in view, we, in the spring of 1937, assisted in the organization of the Mental Hygiene Society of Winston-Salem. This Society asked the League to finance a Child Guidance Clinic for a demonstration period. On November 1, we opened this Clinic in the building which was formerly used as the Hospital for Incurables. We employed Mrs. Florence Ryan as full-time psychiatric social worker, and a full-time secretary. We also had as part-time psychologist Mr. Noble McEwen of the faculty of Salem College, and as part-time psychiatrists Dr. Kemp and Dr. Smith, of Pine Bluff Sanitarium. The pediatricians of the city gave their services when physical examinations were necessary.

While we had professional Placement Secretaries, we were able to give much more specialized training to our volunteers. Miss Shelburne was succeeded by Miss Elsie Larson, who supervised this training for two years. Miss Larson also gave a study course on Mental Hygiene in the spring of 1937, and was frequently called



upon to interpret the work of the Clinic to Parent-Teacher Associations, Child Study Groups, and similar organizations.

Since 1936, we have had a definite program of continued education for our members. We now have a separate Education Chairman, who sits on the board, arranges the provisional course, and obtains for our meetings speakers who will broaden our views on social and economic questions.

Special mention must be made of the work of the Arts Committee -- successor to the old Arts and Interests. In 1936 this committee worked with the Art Center on making an art index to be used for permanent public reference. In April, 1937, the committee undertook a membership drive for the Art Center. Because of the withdrawal of federal aid, it would otherwise have been necessary to close the Center on April 1. The League financed the Center until the close of the school year, thereby making it possible for the students to obtain their credits for art work. The Arts Committee for the next two years assisted in sponsoring a free drawing class.

This committee sent nine entries from our League to the Art Placement Conference of Region V in 1937 in St. Petersburg, Florida. Three of our members received recognition at this conference. The Arts Committee also continued in close touch with the work of the Wachovia Historical Society, and contributed to the show cases for the new Hall of History.

Miss Helen T. Findlay, National Arts Secretary, was the guest of this committee in the fall of 1937.

The Play Group has continued its activity. We have presented, to date, (summer, 1944) twenty-one different plays, nine short and twelve long. We have several times "trouped" with our short plays, presenting them in the auditoriums of the schools. Our record along this line was eleven performances in two weeks.

Members of our League twice won "Honorable Mention" in the Samuel French Play-writing Competition.

In the fall of 1936, Miss Virginia Comer, Field Secretary of the Children's Theatre Department of the A. J. L. A. conducted an Institute on scenery and lighting. The play which we presented shortly afterward in Reynolds Auditorium was the most artistically staged one which we have ever given.

For this performance we arranged free transportation for the children from the distant schools. Ten large buses were donated by Junior League girls and their friends. Also, one thousand free tickets were given to underprivileged children.

This same method of procedure as to buses and tickets was followed in the fall of 1937 when we sponsored the ballet "Pinocchio", presented by Junior Programs, Inc.

Three other League activities of that year should be mentioned. The Scribblers Club employed Mr. Painter of N. C. C. W. as professional critic of their work.

Occupational Therapy classes, similar to those formerly held at our Hospital, were carried on at the County Hospital.

For two weeks before Christmas the League financed the Christmas Exchange. This involved keeping a list of families needing Christmas baskets of food, clothing and toys; and also of individuals and agencies desiring to give these baskets. It was very successful in preventing duplication and haphazard giving and in supplying the wants of most of these families.

During Mrs. Hoyt's administration we had two visits from A. J. L. A. officers. Miss Lettie Witherspoon, Field Secretary of the Welfare Department, visited and spent a week in 1936, and Mrs. Arthur St. Julian Simons, Director of Region V, was here in February, 1937.

Featured in May, 1938, number of Magazine.

In the May, 1938, issue of the J. L. Magazine, our League was the subject of a feature article by Mrs. Eleanor Hard Lake, showing the part we had played in the progress of our community. The title of this article was "Cavalcade of a League". Winston-Salem was chosen for this distinction from the medium-sized Leagues by the national organization on account of our outstanding work, and an article was featured in the May, 1938, issue of the A. J. L. A. magazine.

In March, 1938, Miss Aurelia Plumly was elected president. At this time our Constitution was revised to provide that the new officers should begin their administration in October so that their terms should coincide with the Placement year.



The League continued to sponsor and finance the Child Guidance Clinic under the supervision of the Mental Hygiene Society.

The need of making a plan for permanent psychiatric service was realized. Working in conjunction with the State Board of Charities and Public Welfare, arrangements were made so that Dr. Richard F. Ritchie gave to the Clinic two full days every other week. His salary was paid partly by the state and partly by our own League.

Through his work there was evidenced a growing interest on the part of welfare and civic groups in mental hygiene and in the work of the Clinic. At his suggestion, more Junior League volunteers worked at the Clinic, acting as chauffeurs and supervising a nursery school which was started with ten children in November, 1939. The Clinic building was also used as a meeting place for the East Winston Senior Girl Scouts.

The Christmas Exchange, which was started in 1937, has now grown into a community affair, coordinating the efforts of Bundle Day, the Toy Bureau, the Salvation Army, and other organizations giving at Christmas.

In the spring of 1939, Miss Larson resigned as Placement Secretary, her resignation taking effect in August. It was decided that it was no longer necessary to employ a professional in this capacity.

Through the efforts of the Arts Committee, the exhibits in the new Hall of History were arranged and cataloged so that the Museum was open in time to receive the visitors of Easter, 1938. All of this was done according to plans suggested by a curator from the Valentine Museum of Richmond, Va. In 1939, Junior League members assisted in the restoration of the old part of the Museum and also solicited funds for the purchase of the Salem Tavern by the Wachovia Historical Society. An arts and crafts exhibit of members' work was held at the March, 1939, Junior League meeting and from this were selected the entries for the Regional Exhibit in Charlotte. One first place and two honorable mentions were awarded to Winston-Salem.

In February, 1939, we sponsored the opera "The Bumble Bee Prince" presented by Junior Programs, Inc.

In the spring of 1939 we voted to discontinue our annual dance and, instead, to bring to the community the four New York dramas of the Contemporary Theatre series.



In March, 1940, Mrs. A. Shelburne Johnson was elected president of the Winston-Salem League and served until the autumn of 1941. In the fall of 1940 a City-Wide Children's Theatre Board was organized. In March, 1941, Mrs. Linville Martin was elected Regional Director of A. J. L. A. She was nominated in the fall and her name was presented by our League.

The financial picture of our League was greatly clarified by a visit in December, 1940, from Mrs. Robert Dingman, Secretary of Ways and Means of the A. J. L. A. Mrs. Dingman analyzed our three shops ... which are our chief sources of financial support, and she gave us most helpful suggestions for their improvement. As a result, the profits from these shops have risen and the League found that it was not necessary to undertake any other Ways and Means project during the year. Mrs. Dingman also recommended that our budget be revised and that a financial statement be published, both of which recommendations were executed. At Mrs. Dingman's suggestion a plan was worked out for the conservative spending of the surplus over and above a contingency fund, and the League voted to spend a definite part of the surplus for the coming fiscal year 1941-42.

#### E. Johnson, President - Report April, 1941

Affiliation of Clinic and Bowman Gray School of Medicine recommended in May, 1940. Contract between Bowman Gray School of Medicine and Junior League was voted on and accepted by Junior League at 1940 October meeting. At October meeting Mrs. W. L. Wharton explained Children's Theatre Board, with which League is associated.

December, 1940, Mrs. Dingman, Secretary Ways and Means for A. J. L. A., revised our local budget and worked out a plan for spending surplus over and above a contingency fund.

June, 1941, first Junior League Day - business meeting at Smoke House, lunch at Libby Gray's - film of North Carolina shown.

May, 1942 - Mrs. Linville Martin elected president of A. J. L. A.

March, 1941 - Mrs. Tom Rice elected president - took office in October, 1941 - reelected in 1942 term to spring, 1943.

January, 1942 - Mrs. Helene Lipscomb, War President, talked to heads of social agencies about Junior League's place in the community.

League gave \$500 toward starting C. D. V. O.

Second Junior League Day - Mary Babcock's - terms will now go back to spring beginning.





























